

THE MESSENGER

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

MAY 2024

WEEKLY CAMPUS EVENTS

- Sunday Worship - 10:30 AM
- Sunday School - 9:30 AM (adult & child)
- Drum Class - Mondays 5-8 PM Apr-July
- NA Meeting - Wednesdays at 7:30 PM
- AA Meeting - Saturdays at 10:00 AM
- Mondays at 7:00 PM
- Soccer Shots - Saturday mornings &
Tuesday evenings (Spring-Fall)



2024 COUNCIL EXECUTIVES

- President – Jeff Williams
- Vice President – Jason Eager
- Secretary – Thom Kruse
- Treasurer – Bob Thompson

2024 COUNCIL LIAISONS

- Christian Education
Jason Eager
- Communications & Publications
Jason Eager
- Finance & Stewardship
John Bielewicz
- Mutual Ministry
Jeff Williams
- Personnel
John Bielewicz, Thom Kruse
- Property
Phil Spano
- Fellowship, Social Ministry
& Evangelism
Sharon Giza
- Worship & Music
Thom Kruse
- Youth
(open)

Next Council Meeting

Tuesday May 14 at 7:00 PM

Serving God and neighbor

Christ is risen!

Serving Christ with you all at Ascension Lutheran Church is an honor. Following Jesus has gifted me Kathy (we have been married 33 years), our four adult children, two grandchildren, and twenty-five Easters at Grace Rochester. Being a disciple of our Risen Lord gives abilities and opportunities for growing the body of Christ.



I'm witnessing the genuine trust in God and one another as the scriptures are made clear to us. A goal mentioned by our Good Shepherd is for us to have Joy in abundance. Understanding this high calling, as we are given the understanding by the presence of the helper, Holy Spirit, is put into action through us.

Serving God and neighbor is less about "feeling like it" and more about demonstrating the Truth within us. Cause us to hear and see what it is you will for us dear Lord in the following from 1John 3:18 - *Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and truth.*

Serving God and neighbor is death and resurrection. One moment we are crushed by revealed brokenness and the next we are stood up to rejoice in The Calvary Victory. Again, it is the Truth, gifted by God about us, made clear in our living and dying as followers of only Christ. Believing and demonstrating as God's children, we continue until Jesus returns to reveal what is next.

Keeping in mind our important calling as Christ's beloved we are moved daily to put first, truth action, in hungry anticipation of our Lord's return.

Please know I am another resource who is covering you all in prayers!



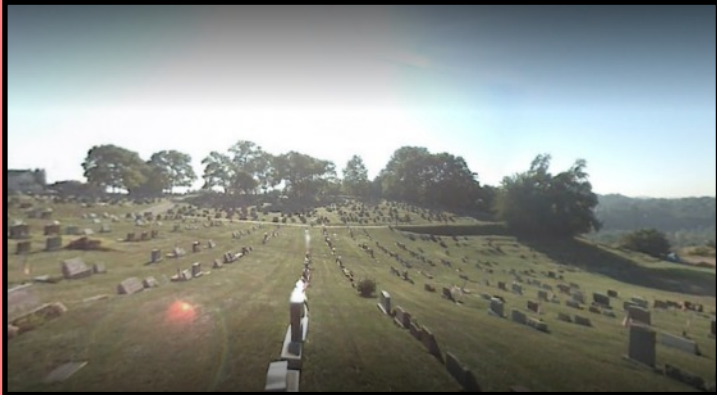
Rev. Gregory S. Clagg

Interim Pastor

Pastor Clagg also serves Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Rochester, Pa.

Mount Calvary Cemetery

1715 Middletown Road
McKees Rocks, PA 15136
Robert J. Dudek, Supervisor
mtcalvarycem@alcpgh.com



Mount Calvary Cemetery Board

Judy Henry • Bob Hughes • Bette Ann Kallay
Jason Eager • George C Kasich • Joyce Leister

Social Ministry & Evangelism

S.A.L.T. - Serving As Lutherans Together

MAY

-CLOTHING DRIVE: Collecting gently used clothing for men and women throughout the month of May to be donated to Veteran's Hospital.

-ROAD CLEAN-UP: May 25th at 10:00 AM

JUNE

Please mark your calendars for the
YARD SALE on June 8, 2024!

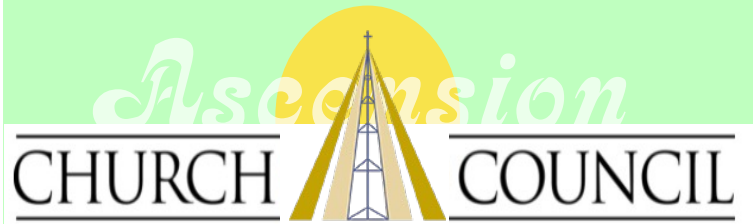
If anyone has any connections for good community advertising, please let the SALT committee know. (Also, feel free to post this event on community groups/forums on our behalf!)

VOLUNTEERS also needed to help on June 8 for both BAKE SALE and YARD SALE duties.

Upcoming SALT meetings for 2024:

• July 21 • Sept 22

Please reach out to Sharon Giza (Fellowship, Social Ministry & Evangelism liaison) to join these essential efforts in the life of our church.



ALC Council Meeting Highlights

Council meeting was held Tuesday April 9, 2024

- **Call to order:** Jason called to order 6:59 pm
attendance: Jason, Bob, Phil, Sharon, Pr. Clagg
- **President:** Jason reviewed Ministry Site Profile process outline prepared by Jeff. Council to review, fill in thoughts for next meeting and consolidate info into a draft/guidance for the Call Committee
- **Fellowship, Social Ministry & Evangelism:**
Apr. 20 church clean-up; May 25 Road Clean-Up
- **Cemetery:** "Green" burials discussed
- **Property:** Property Use Agreement was reviewed. Committee to meet to discuss e-Sign.
- **Communications:** web site to be updated; forthcoming letter to congregation for assistance.
- **New Business:** "Call Committee" nominations; Supply schedule for May; Bible Study
- **Important dates:**
May 14th – Next Meeting at 7pm
- **Adjournment:** Motion: Sharon, second: Bob.

Call Committee formed, meets

Members of the newly-formed Ascension Call Committee had their first meeting on Wednesday, April 24 at 7pm.

In attendance were committee members Megan Mezzio, Bob Thompson, Jerry Wessel, Debbie Whitfield, Sharon Giza (proxy for Joyce Leister who was in Germany), and alternate Avis Ritter. Phil Spano was absent with due cause.

Call to order was by ALC Council President Jeff Williams, followed by introductions. Joyce was nominated as Chairperson. Jerry agreed to be the backup.

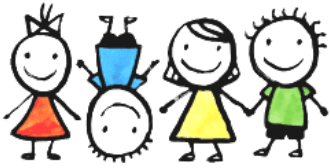
Thanks to Sharon sharing her efforts, we were able to get to page 4 of the Ministry Site Profile. (MSP) We use this official form to evaluate our congregation's needs as we continue the process of calling a new pastor.

The meeting concluded with the Lord's Prayer. The next Call Committee meeting date is Thursday 5/23/2024 at 7pm.

Ascension
Thursday May 9

Pentecost
Sunday May 19

AUTISM THANK YOU!



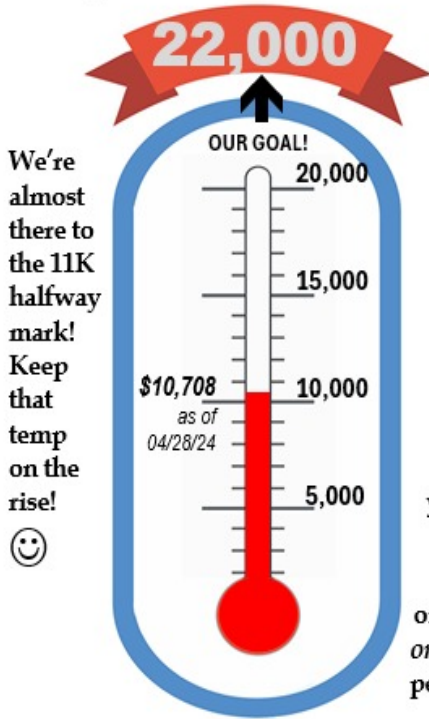
SEEING THE WORLD FROM A DIFFERENT ANGLE

On Sunday April 21st, Ascension member Jacob Lescallete shone a brilliant light on **Autism Awareness Month**. Jacob shared

his personal journey and provided information on Autism Speaks. Thanks to all who made donations (\$267 was raised!) to this organization that is dedicated to promoting solutions for the needs of individuals with autism and their families. A walk for Autism Speaks will be held this fall at Acrisure Stadium.



Temperature's still on the rise . . .



You can greatly help to fund this new Special Project by directing a portion of your Sunday offering to "OTHER" on your giving envelope or write "e-Sign" on your pew envelope offering.

Ascension Church
YARD SALE
SATURDAY JUNE 8, 2024
8:00 AM to NOON

Bake Sale and refreshments also available!

- ◆ \$10 per area (approx 10'x10')
- ◆ You keep all of the \$\$\$ from what you sell!
- ◆ We provide the space, you provide your own table/set-up and treasures to sell.
- ◆ Register by calling the church office (412) 859-3711 or by e-mailing Ascensionyardsale@gmail.com

Ascension Lutheran Church | 1290 Silver Lane
Robinson Township PA 15136 | 412-859-3711



Remember MOM! ❤️
Sunday May 12, 2024

Paintings DECODED

In the Spring of 2023, Ascension Lutheran Church in Robinson Township, Pa. commissioned BryteArt, Inc. to create two 48" x 30" oil paintings, to be installed for Easter Sunday, 2024. The paintings are intended to honor to the congregation's heritage as a merger of Ascension and Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran churches on September 26, 2021.

Both "Christ the Good Shepherd" and "The Ascension of our Lord" were dedicated to the Glory of God on Easter Day, March 31, 2024 A.D. The paintings are original compositions created by Rev. Scott A. Bryte.

An informative bible study workshop on the topics of the two paintings was presented at Ascension Church by the artist on April 27. Notes by Pr. Bryte are featured on pages 4-5 of *The Messenger*.

CHRIST THE GOOD SHEPHERD

48" X 30" (54" X 36" IN FRAME). OIL ON CANVAS

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

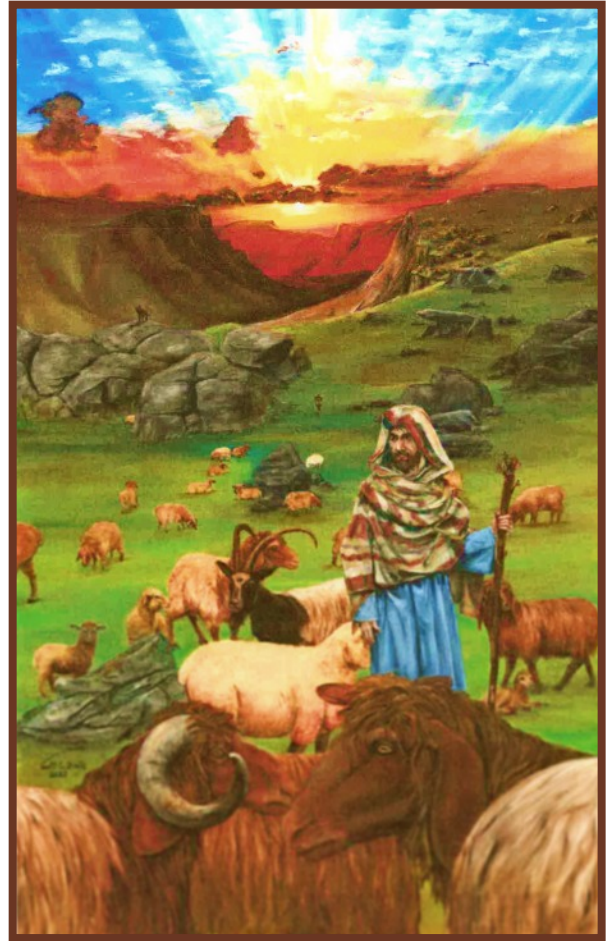
He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff — they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.

John 10:1-14

"Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers." Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. So again Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away — and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd.



CHRIST THE GOOD SHEPHERD

POINTS OF INTEREST

1. The sunrise in the background points to Jesus as the risen Lord.
2. The mountains depicted are real mountains in Israel.
3. The only use of the color red is the stripes on the scarf that surrounds the face of Jesus.
4. Jesus's staff is the staff of the high priest Aaron which sprouted almond blossoms. (Numbers 17:1-11). Jesus is the high priest (Hebrews 4:14 — 5:10) who is the touchpoint between God and humanity.
5. Jesus' body is turned toward the right side of the painting, but he is looking back toward the sheep to make sure that they are behind him.
6. Most of the sheep pictured are awassi sheep, the most common breed found in the Levant.
7. The shepherd protects the sheep from predatory wolves, as Jesus protects us from physical and spiritual harm. (John 10:11-15)
8. The goat among the sheep represents sin within the world, the church as a whole, and in ourselves. (Leviticus 16:20-22) (Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:28-29; Revelation 1:7)
9. The sheep in the foreground look directly at the viewer, including them into the flock.



THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD

54" X 36" (PLUS EXTENSION). OIL ON PANEL

Acts 1:1-11

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. "This," he said, "is what you have heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will RECEIVE POWER WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS COME UPON YOU; AND YOU WILL BE MY witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."



THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD

POINTS OF INTEREST

1. It is impossible to separate completely the ascension of our Lord from his promise to come again. To emphasize that the second coming is for real people living in real places and at real times (and to honor the faithful witness of this congregation) the action of the painting takes place over McKees Rocks.
2. As in "Christ the Good Shepherd, Jesus' staff is the staff of the high priest Aaron which sprouts almond blossoms. Here, the staff is in full bloom.
3. Jesus is dressed in robes, indicating both his universal kingship, and his role as great high priest.
4. Jesus wears blue, the color of the new day (tomorrow and all the future, and of the season of Advent, a time to remember that we are waiting for our Lord to come again.
5. Jesus and the angels add up to seven figures. Seven is the Biblical number of holiness and completeness (think of the seven days of creation). Without Jesus, there are just the six angels. In scripture, six is the number of unholiness and incompleteness.
6. **The Angels:**
This painting turns slightly away from how angels are usually depicted. The angels have tails and wing shapes of real birds. Each angel bears a color of the liturgical calendar.
 - a. The **White Angel** at the top is the most traditional. It has the wings of a dove (Luke 3:21-22). White is the color for the seasons of Christmas and Easter. The white angel flies to Jesus with a gold crown of glory.

- b. The **Black Angel** represents Good Friday, and carries a crown of thorns away from Jesus. It has the wings of a raven, a harbinger of death.
- c. The **Purple Angel** is the season of Lent. Since lent is a time to remember our mortality, the angel has the wings of a vulture. Vultures circle when death is near. Lent is also a time of fasting and repentance. The angel is emaciated and is wearing sackcloth and ashes.
- d. The **Green Angel** is the season of Epiphany. Epiphany begins on January 6, and continues until Ash Wednesday. Epiphany means to shine upon. The season begins with remembering that arrival of the wisemen (magi) who followed a star to the baby Jesus in Bethlehem. The angel holds a star above its head. It has the wings of a flamingo, which is native to Persia, and likely home of the wisemen.
- e. Pentecost occurs 50 days after Easter, and is sometimes called the birthday of the Church (Acts 1:1-18). The day of Pentecost is marked with red, but the 20+ Sundays after Pentecost use green altar cloths. Thus, the **Pentecost Angel** has red and green wings. She has fiery red hair and wears a red tunic. She is the only angel with shoes, since Jesus sends the church out into the world to share the Gospel. The parrot wings and oversized megaphone also emphasize our responsibility to spread God's Word.
- f. The **Advent Angel** is blue and has the wings of a lark, a bird known for announcing the new day. He carries a large hourglass to remind us that we wait for Jesus to return. Most noticeable is that he is flying out of the picture and toward the viewer. Our lives are spent waiting for Jesus.

Best Wishes . . .

MAY BIRTHDAYS!

- Date | Member/Friend
- 2 Charlotte DeCola
 - 3 Rudy Marnich Jr.
 - 4 Melissa DeCola
Amy Reckner
 - 6 Betty Simpson
 - 8 Bobby Brown
 - 9 Bob Hughes
Paula Tomchak
 - 10 Bob Bryan
 - 14 Johnathan Endes
 - 16 Megan Mezzio
 - 17 Nathan Reckner
 - 20 Dale Cerar
 - 23 Janey Zoltun
 - 24 Bob Thompson
 - 28 George C. Kasich
 - 30 Mike Kinney
Paul Tomchak
Emilia DeCola
 - 31 Jill Lescallete
Jacob Lescallete



MAY ANNIVERSARIES!

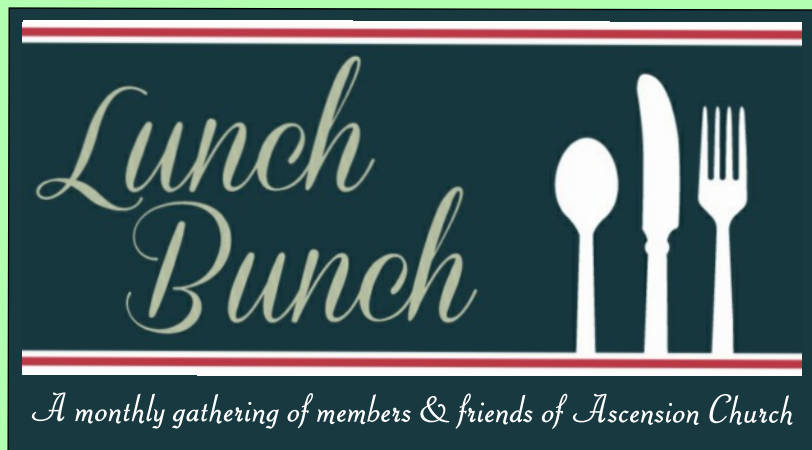
- Date | Members/Friends
- 20 Sharon & Brian Giza
 - 22 Debora & William Whitfield
 - 25 Cindy & Bob Stathers



. . . and Blessings to ALL!

OOPS!

Sincere apologies to **AVIS RITTER** for a text-box error which "hid" her **April 2nd birthday** from last month's Birthday list!
Hope it was happy!



Join Ascension's LUNCH BUNCH May 16

Seventeen Ascension Lunch Bunchers made it to Frank G's in Bridgewater on April 18th (although two others never found the venue and one would-be was in the hospital). The service was just a little slow due to another large group arriving just before we did, but that just made for more conversations and anticipation, as the food was quite good when it finally arrived. We enjoyed a nice view of the Beaver River, but we were thankful that it wasn't at flood stage after the heavy rains which were endured in early April.

On May 16th, the Bunch will try yet another new venue - this time it's Angelo's Restaurant at 2109 North Franklin Drive in Washington (PA, not DC). The menu posted on their web site looks pretty good, and is not just Italian even though their web site states that the restaurant was opened in 1939 by the current owners' grandparents, Angelo and Giacomina Passalacqua. But, if you "like-a spicy meat-a balls" or other decidedly Italian fare, then Angelo's is the place to be!

As usual, call (or tell in person) Jerry Wessel 412-787-1213 or Nancy Schreiber 412-859-3969 by Tuesday May 14 and let them know if you'd like to convoy there. We plan to arrive by 11:30 AM and it's about a 30-minute drive from Ascension. Hope that you can join us to give it a try!

~ Jerry Wessel



ATTENTION

2024 GRADUATES!

Calling all 2024 High School & College Graduates:

Please let the SOCIAL COMMITTEE know where you are graduating from so that we can duly recognize your achievements and to invite you to a special celebration in July. EMAIL office@alcpgh.com with your info, ASAP!

LESSER FESTIVALS & commemorations

May 1 Philip and James, Apostles

Philip was one of the first disciples of Jesus, who after following Jesus invited Nathanael to “come and see.” According to tradition, Philip preached in Asia Minor and died as a martyr in Phrygia. James, the son of Alphaeus, is called “the Less” (meaning “short” or “younger”) to distinguish him from another apostle named James who is commemorated July 25. Philip and James are commemorated together because the remains of these two saints were placed in the Church of the Apostles in Rome on this day in 561.

May 2 Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria d.373

Best remembered for defending the teaching that Christ was fully God against those who taught otherwise, Athanasius was an influential church leader around the time of the Council of Nicea. He was banished from Alexandria five times for his views.

May 4 Monica, mother of Augustine d.387

Monica was married to a pagan husband who was ill-tempered and unfaithful, but whom she helped bring into the Christian faith. She repeated the influence on her son Augustine, who went on to become one of the greatest church teachers.

May 8 Julian of Norwich, renewer of the church, d. ca.1416

When she was about thirty years old, Julian (or Juliana) reported visions that she later compiled into a book, *Sixteen Revelations of Divine Love*, now a classic of medieval mysticism. The visions declared that love was the meaning of religious experience, provided by Christ who is love, for the purpose of love.

May 9 Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, renewer of the church, hymnwriter d.1760

When he was 22, a group of Moravians asked permission to live on Zinzendorf’s land. He agreed, and eventually worldwide Moravian missions emanated from this community. Zinzendorf participated in these missions, and is also remembered for writing hymns characteristic of his Pietistic faith.

May 14 Matthias, Apostle

Matthias was the apostle added to the Twelve after Jesus’ resurrection, as a replacement for the dead Judas Iscariot. He had traveled among the followers of Jesus throughout the Lord’s ministry. Formerly commemorated on February 24, Matthias’s celebration is moved to May 14 in agreement with most Western calendars.

May 18 Erik, King of Sweden, martyr d.1160

Erik is considered the patron saint of Sweden. As king of that nation, he tried to bring peace in the region, and to spread Christianity in Scandinavia. He was also known for his attempts to make fair laws and to protect those who were poor or sick.

May 21 Helena, mother of Constantine d.ca.330

Wife of the co-regent of the West, Helena (or Helen) was mother of Constantine, who later became Roman emperor. After he was converted to Christianity, he influenced her also to become Christian. She is also remembered for traveling through Palestine and building churches on the sites she believed to be where Jesus was born, where he was buried, and from which he ascended.

May 24 Nicolaus Copernicus, d.1543;

Leonhard Euler, d.1783; scientists

These two men were both scientists who helped to explain the wonders of God’s universe. Copernicus is best known for promoting the idea that the sun, not the earth, is at the center of our solar system. Euler was one of the founders of pure mathematics, and contributed to many other fields.

May 27 John Calvin, renewer of the church d.1564

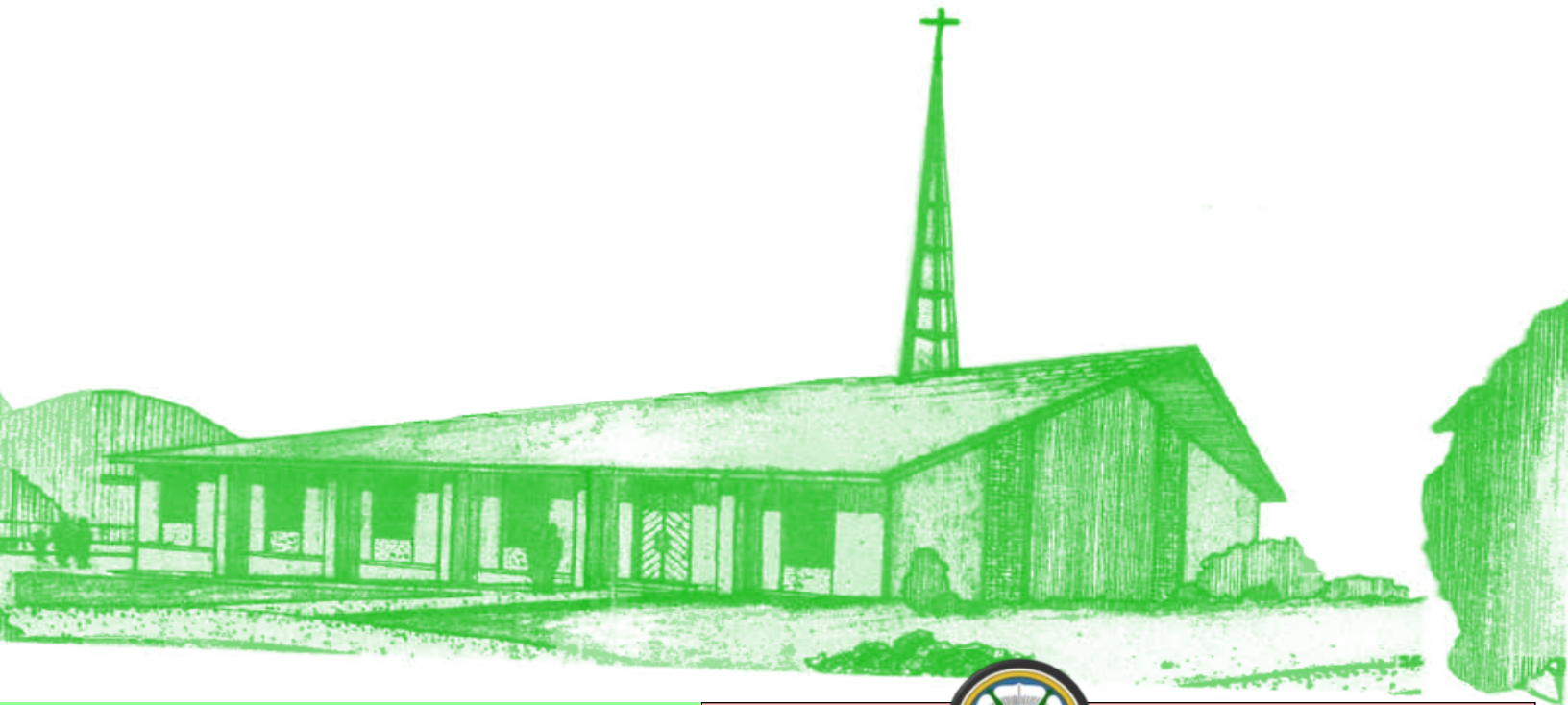
Gifted both as a systematic theologian and as an interpreter of scriptures, Calvin embraced the Reformation, and as a preacher in Geneva, Switzerland, brought a theocratic government to it. He is regarded as the father of the Reformed churches.

May 29 Jiri Tranovský, hymnwriter d.1637

Considered the “Luther of the Slavs” and the father of Slovak hymnody, Tranovský trained at the University of Wittenberg in the early seventeenth century, was ordained in 1616 and spent his life preaching and teaching in Prague, Silesia, and finally Slovakia. He produced a translation of the *Augsburg Confession* and published his hymn collection *Cithara Sanctorum*.

May 31 Visit of Mary to Elizabeth

Sometime after the Annunciation, Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth. This occasion is sometimes referred to as “The Visitation.” Elizabeth greeted Mary with the words “Blessed are you among women,” and Mary responded with her famous song, the Magnificat. Luke’s gospel tells that even John the Baptist rejoiced and leapt in his mother’s womb when Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting. On this festival two women are seen: one, the elder, bears the last prophet of the old covenant, and one, the younger, bears the incarnate Word and the new covenant.



*To be Christ's Disciples,
nurture our faith, serve God,
welcome our neighbors,
and joyfully share in His love.*

Contact Us
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PLACE
STAMP
HERE

